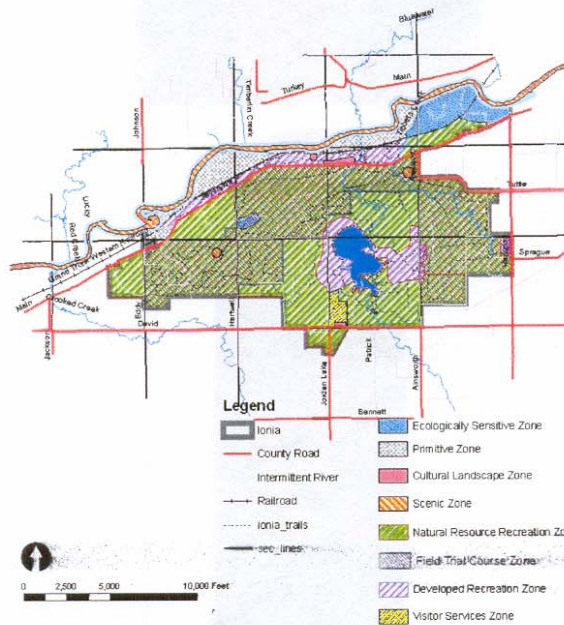


December, 2005

GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

Long-range management guidance focused on the specific natural resources, historic-cultural resources, recreation opportunities, and the education-interpretation opportunities of...

Ionia State Recreation Area



Prepared by:

Paul N. Curtis, Management Plan Administrator

PLAN APPROVALS:


Chief, Parks and Recreation Division

1/23/06
Date


Resource Management Deputy *by David Freed*

1-24-06
Date


Director, Michigan Department of Natural Resources

1/25/06
Date



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Long-range planning for Ionia State Recreation Area began in September of 2003 as one of four parks statewide where a new planning philosophy was implemented. “Management Planning”, a comprehensive, resource based process, is our adaptation of National Park Service planning methodology. In our iteration, which focuses on the four tenants of our Mission Statement, we thoroughly inventory the (1) natural resource values of the park, establish its (2) historic/cultural resources, identify the (3) recreational opportunities and explore the (4) educational and interpretation opportunities.

With this base of knowledge and with input of the “Planning Team” (made up of Department resource staff, stakeholders and public), we established an ‘identity’ for the park. The key significance of Ionia State Recreation Area (Ionia SRA) is:

First, Ionia SRA was established for purposes of developing a man-made lake and creating public recreational opportunities in what was defined in the early 1960’s as the “lakeless” area of the state. This initiative established the park and led to development of Sessions Lake in the late 1970’s. Sessions Lake is managed by Fisheries Division as a warm water fishery that experiences strong public use and appreciation. Active recreation for swimming, boating (no wake lake), and fishing, as well as passive recreation for picnicking and viewing are hallmark attributes of the lake.

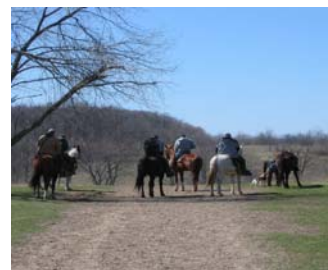


Sessions Lake

Located on the Grand River in Ionia County, this 4,418 acre park provides inclusive recreational opportunities in an area lacking in public lands. From its inception, Ionia SRA has been planned, developed, and used for a wide range of recreational and educational interests.



Second, an important component of the recreational use of Ionia SRA lies in the extensive field trial activities found there. Under authority of the “Special Dog Training Areas Act, Act 82 of 1947, the Natural Resources Commission designated Ionia SRA as one of eight Field Trial Grounds locations in the state, and specifically designated three one-hour courses at Ionia SRA for establishment of a “Championship” Trial grounds.



Field trialers nationwide recognize Ionia SRA as a high quality venue for their sport.

In concert with this analysis of the park purpose and significance, the Planning Team established appropriate Management Zones and their extent of influence on the park. From a pallet of nine standard zones, we utilized seven for Ionia SRA, and developed a new one to address the field trial courses established by the NRC. The Management

Zone Plan is found on the cover of this document, and a thorough review of all zones is found within. A condensed review of those applied at Ionia SRA is as follows:

- Primitive Zone – of the total 4,418 acres in the park, 543 acres of undeveloped land fall into this zone description. This represents the floodplain of the Grand River, bounded in general by four miles of river frontage and the Grand Rapids & Eastern Railroad line. It is not uncommon for spring floods to inundate this area with 5-10 feet of water every spring. The soils of the zone are highly organic silts, and easily subject to damage. Under the Primitive Zone designation, only foot traffic will be allowed...there will be no mountain bike or equestrian uses permitted. An exception to this may be considered for continuance (on a seasonal basis) of an existing boating access location already established. Described below, an Ecologically Sensitive Zone designation has been identified at the far east end of the Primitive Zone.
- Ecologically Sensitive Zone(s) – A total of 227 acres are designated in this zone, with portions in both the Primitive Zone and the Natural Resource Recreation Zone. In the Primitive Zone, 208 acres are identified for protection of the nesting habitat of two bald eagle nests and a heron rookery, all in the same vicinity. In the Field Trial Course Zone (Course #2), 19 acres are identified for protection of the habitat of the trumpeter swan. (Note...zone designation in all areas of the park will be defined by wherever the protected birds nest). In both locations, the zone will have a 'seasonal' designation, and the same period of closure of February 1 to July 15. This will impact early season goose and turkey hunting seasons.

All Field Trial Courses, having been managed as a grassland habitat for field trialing, are also favorable for protected and declining species of upland birds, including:

- Henslow's sparrow (State Threatened)
- Grasshopper sparrow (Special Concern)
- Bob-o-links (in decline)
- Eastern meadowlark (in decline)

The specific management guidance for these birds will be addressed in the "Field Trial Grounds Management Plan", but it should be expected that there will be some impact on the management regime for the field trial courses, and the running of events.

- Natural Resource Recreation Zone – The Natural Resource Recreation Zone is the largest zone in the park, with 3,113 acres comprising 70% of the total. It is utilized for general recreation, including hunting, fishing, trapping, birding, and trail use for hiking, cross-country skiing and equestrian use. Also within this zone is a special use for field trials. A non-standard zone has been established to

address the specific management needs for this use. This zone is described below.

- “Field Trial Course Zone” – As a subset of the Natural Resources Recreation Zone, this 1,969 acre (non-standard) zone recognizes the NRC designation of Ionia SRA for ‘Championship’ field trial purposes. The Field Trial Course Zone is of considerable impact to the park, accounting for 45% of the total park acreage. This zone carries with it specific uses, natural resource management, and visitor use management.

Within Course #2 of the Zone is the potential for designation of an Ecologically Sensitive Zone in the wildlife flooding areas (noted above), and impacting the upland grasslands. This will occur only if the nesting trumpeter swans and/or the nesting of the protected upland birds takes place.

Activation of an Ecologically Sensitive Zone has the potential of impacting field trial activities. Retriever trials would not be allowed in the zone (for swans) if so applied. Pointer trial activities could be affected by nesting of the upland species. The “Field Trial Grounds Management Plan” will address this.

- Developed Recreation Zone(s) – There are three separate areas with this designation. The total acreage of the zone is 492 acres. 249 acres of that total incorporate all of the modern campgrounds, equestrian campground, day-use areas, boat launch and equestrian staging area. These are all well defined use areas centered on Sessions Lake, and developed for intensive recreational use.

The second is the mountain bike trail that is bounded by the Grand Rapids & Eastern Railroad line to the north and Riverside Drive to the south. As an old gravel pit/borrow area, the natural resource condition of this 229 acre zone is low, and opportunity for trail use and expansion high.

The third segment of Developed Recreation Zone is a subset of the Field Trial Course Zone. At the Ionia Field Trialers Headquarters, approximately 14.5 acres of land at the far east end of the park are developed for administration of field trials with a headquarters building, barn with stables, a large parking area and facilities for overnight stays by field trial participants. It is intensively used during the field trial ‘season’ of March through June and September through October.

- Scenic Zone – This zone recognizes the viewing opportunities of the four miles of natural frontage of the Grand River, Sessions Lake, and two specific view points within the park. There is no relevant acreage determination for this zone.
- Cultural Resource Zone – Several known historically significant locations exist within the park. The Sessions Schoolhouse along Riverside Drive is one such location, and this same area is also the general location of a Native American

settlement. Nearby is the location of the County ‘Poor House’, an infirmary that once existed. Remaining is a cemetery that PRD maintains. Also along Riverside Drive is the “Posse House”, a successor to the Sessions Schoolhouse. Along David Highway, the park manager’s residence (the ‘Haynor House’) is of historic note, as are other scattered cultural resources that have also been identified within the park. This zone totals approximately 21 acres of the park.

- Visitor Services Zone – This zone takes in the headquarters and shop area of the park, and for purposes of potential future relocation or expansion, the zone has been pushed north of the current use area. It totals just over 43 acres of land.

Perhaps of most significance for this park is the management of the field trial courses in concert with the recreational uses of the general public. There is a dire need for improved education and communication. The first time park visitor has no clue that there is a ‘Field Trial’ use of the park that takes in nearly 45% of all park acreage. That visitor also has no awareness of the differences in allowable uses. Conversely, visiting field trialers look at their use of the park as an exclusive use, and they too are likely unaware that other public users may in fact use the designated courses for purposes other than field trials. Public comment in the planning process provided strong support of this need for improved education and communication.

There is a strong and historical equestrian trail interest at Ionia SRA, which in some areas is in conflict with the field trial course activity. A significant portion of the equestrian trail system lies within the field trial courses (Course #3 and a small portion of Course #2). It is acknowledged that there is a need for trail alignment modifications to eliminate or mitigate conflicts with field trials. Additionally, the need for re-alignment of trails is demonstrated by areas of resource damage and degradation that could be minimized.

Finally, the Planning Team recommends modification of the designated boundary of the Recreation Area to be David Highway as the south boundary, and Harwood Road as the east boundary. The current ownership of much of this land is in large parcels with few owners. Adoption of this recommendation would strengthen our opportunities to expand recreational opportunities in the Recreation Area, and better define the boundary for management purposes.

INTRODUCTION

Planning Process Overview ([“Management Planning Process Outline”](#)) – The Management Planning Process develops a series of planning steps, each built upon the previous, that keep all planning and action decisions focused on (1) the mission of the Parks and Recreation Division, and (2) the specific Purpose and Significance of the park.

There are four phases of planning, implemented in the following order:

- **Phase 1** - General Management Plan (GMP) - Long-range (20 yr) goals
- **Phase 2** – Long-range Action Plan - long range (10 yr) goals to attain the GMP (requires review of Phase 1)
- **Phase 3** - 5-Year Action Plan – specific actions to implement (requires review of Phase 1 and Phase 2)
- **Phase 4** - Annual Action Plan and Progress Report – what will be done this year and what progress was made on last year’s plan

This is the **General Management Plan**, the first step in our planning process. In this phase of planning, we are defining what the park will look like in twenty years. What will be the condition of flora and fauna? How will we address historic and cultural resources? What recreational opportunities will be provided? What education and interpretation efforts will meet the visitor? What will guide the manager’s operational decisions? What will be the visitor’s overall experience?

A key tool of this plan is the identification of [“Management Zones”](#) which define specific characteristics of the land, addressing management for:

- Natural features
- Historic/cultural features
- Education/interpretation
- Recreational opportunities

These four elements represent the primary goals of the PRD Mission Statement, and provide guidance for both planning and management decisions. Within the parameters of this guidance, “Purpose” and “Significance” statements are developed for the park that establishes its unique identity and focus. No two parks are the same and this emphasis is directed at ensuring that the differences found from park to park are acknowledged, highlighted and celebrated.

Planning Objectives - The objective of this General Management Plan is to bring together Department staff, impacted and impacting stakeholders, and the public who use the park in a planning process that will define and clarify the unique “Purpose” and “Significance” of Ionia State Recreation Area. Collectively, we will reinforce those attributes in the planning and management decisions that impact the park through the implementation of the Management Zone Plan. Future action plans, whether focused on a development proposal, a resource improvement initiative, an interpretive program, or day-to-day management of the park will be guided by this General Management Plan.

PLANNING TEAM

Accomplishment of our planning objectives was and is dependent upon the valuable input provided by all members of the 'Planning Team'. Following are the names of those critical participants in this planning process:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Representing</u>
Paul N. Curtis, Chair	MDNR-PRD, Management Plan Administrator
Ted Kessler	MDNR-PRD, Park Manager
Susan Lothrop	MDNR-PRD, Rose Lake District Supervisor
Joe Strach	MDNR-PRD, Rose Lake District Planner
Harold Herta	MDNR-PRD, Resource Management Section
Dan Lord	MDNR-PRD, Statewide Development Planner
Ray Fahlsing	MDNR-PRD, Stewardship Program Manager
Glenn Palmgren	MDNR-PRD, Stewardship Ecologist
Rob Strittmatter	MDNR-PRD, Park Ranger

Richard Hausler	MDNR-FMFM, Environmental Forestry Specialist
Brad Dohm	MDNR-LED, Conservation Officer
John Niewoonder	MDNR-WD, Wildlife Biologist
Donna Jones	MDNR-WD, Wildlife Tech
Mark Sargent	MDNR-WD, Wildlife Biologist
Lori Sargent	MDNR-WD, Resource Analyst
Scott Whitcomb	MDNR-WD, Public Lands Specialist
David Dominic	MDNR-WD, South Central Management Unit Supervisor
Amy Harrington	MDNR-FD, Fisheries Biologist
Douglas Finley	MDNR-EO, Education and Outreach Manager
Jack Hires	Field Trialer, Ionia Field Trial Grounds Committee
Charles Landstaff	Field Trialer, Chair, MUCC Field Trial Grounds Committee
Wayne Warners	Field Trialer, Trial Coordinator, MUCC Field Trial Grounds Committee
Bob Keilholtz	Equestrian, President, Ionia Horse Trails Association
Debbie Haskins	Equestrian
Clare Haskins	Equestrian
Joe Mast	Equestrian
Bill Wyszomierski	Equestrian
Duane Dykstra	Equestrian

CORE VALUES

Guidance for the General Management Plan stems from the Mission Statements of the Department and the Division, and the Purpose and Significance Statements that have evolved through the planning process. The core values found in these statements must be reflected in this long-range General Management Plan for Ionia State Recreation Area and subsequently reflected in any shorter range action plans:

DNR Mission Statement - *“The Michigan Department of Natural Resources is committed to the conservation, protection, management, use and enjoyment of the State’s natural resources for current and future generations.”*

PRD Mission Statement - *"Acquire, protect, and preserve the natural, historic, and cultural features of Michigan’s unique resources and provide public recreation and educational opportunities.”*

The core values derived from these statements are that PRD will acquire, preserve and protect; (1) natural resources, (2) cultural resources, (3) provide public recreation, and (4) provide educational opportunities.

Park Purpose - Park purpose statements are based on park legislation, legislative history, special designations and DNR policies. These statements reaffirm the reasons for which Ionia State Recreation Area was identified as part of the State Park system.

- Ionia SRA was established for purposes of developing a manmade lake and creating public recreational opportunities in what was defined in the early 1960's as the "lakeless" area of the state. This initiative established the park and led to development of Sessions Lake in the late 1970's.
- To preserve and protect the park's unique natural resources for current and future generations.
- To preserve and protect the park's historic/cultural resources.
- To provide opportunities for recreational uses and experiences in an area lacking in same, that are compatible with the park's resource(s) base.
- To provide educational and interpretive opportunities for the public that reflect the mission of the DNR and the unique qualities of Ionia State Recreation Area.

Park Significance - Park significance statements capture the essence of the park's importance to carry out the core values of our PRD Mission. They recognize the natural and cultural heritage values of the park and the recreational and educational opportunities afforded. These statements describe the distinctiveness of Ionia State Recreation Area. Understanding these distinctions help managers make decisions that preserve those special resources and values necessary to accomplish the park's purposes.

- Ionia SRA, located on the Grand River in Ionia County, provides inclusive recreational opportunities in an area lacking in public lands. From its inception, Ionia SRA has been planned, developed and used for a wide range of recreational and educational interests.
- Ionia SRA, located in what was described as a "lakeless" region of the state, was identified in 1965 as one of the locations for development of a manmade lake to provide both water-based and general recreational opportunities to the growing population of southern Michigan.
- Under authority of the "Special Dog Training Areas Act, Act 82 of 1947, the Natural Resources Commission designated Ionia SRA as one of eight Field Trial

Grounds locations in the state, and specifically designated three one-hour courses at Ionia SRA for establishment of a “Championship” Trial grounds.

- Ionia SRA offers a variety of water features including Tibbets Creek, a designated trout stream, Sessions Creek and tributaries, frontage on approximately four miles of the Grand River, Sessions Lake (a 140 acre lake managed by Fisheries Division), and wildlife floodings created for waterfowl habitat.
- Ionia SRA provides Grand River floodplain habitat to two bald eagle nests and a heron rookery. The protected Trumpeter Swan has nested in and occupied the waterfowl floodings within the park.
- Occurrences of ‘Threatened’ (T), ‘Special Concern’ (SC), and ‘Endangered’ (E) species occur in the park for:
 - Henslow’s Sparrow (T)
 - Blanding’s Turtle (SC)
 - Elktote Mussel (SC)
 - Purple wartyback (SC)
 - Round pigtoe mussel (SC)
 - Snuffbox mussel (E)
- Ionia SRA offers excellent opportunities for research, education and interpretation in the areas of:
 - Significance and importance of field trialing
 - Cultural aspects of Native American and early settlement life.
 - Natural Sciences

Legal Mandates - For all park General Management Plans, all legal mandates will be identified and will serve to further guide the development of the General Management Plan and subsequent Action Plans. For our planning purposes, the term “Legal Mandates” refers to not only state law, but also the administrative tools of “Policy” and “Directive” of the Natural Resource Commission, the Department, and Parks and Recreation Division. Specific to Ionia SRA, the following legal mandates have been identified:

- PA 451 OF 1994, PART 741 - STATE PARK SYSTEM - NATURAL RESOURCE AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT - This act is the recodification of law that established the Michigan State Park System and defined the powers and duties of same. Notable in this law is Section 324.74102 which identifies the duties of the department and reinforces those core values cited above.

This section reads:

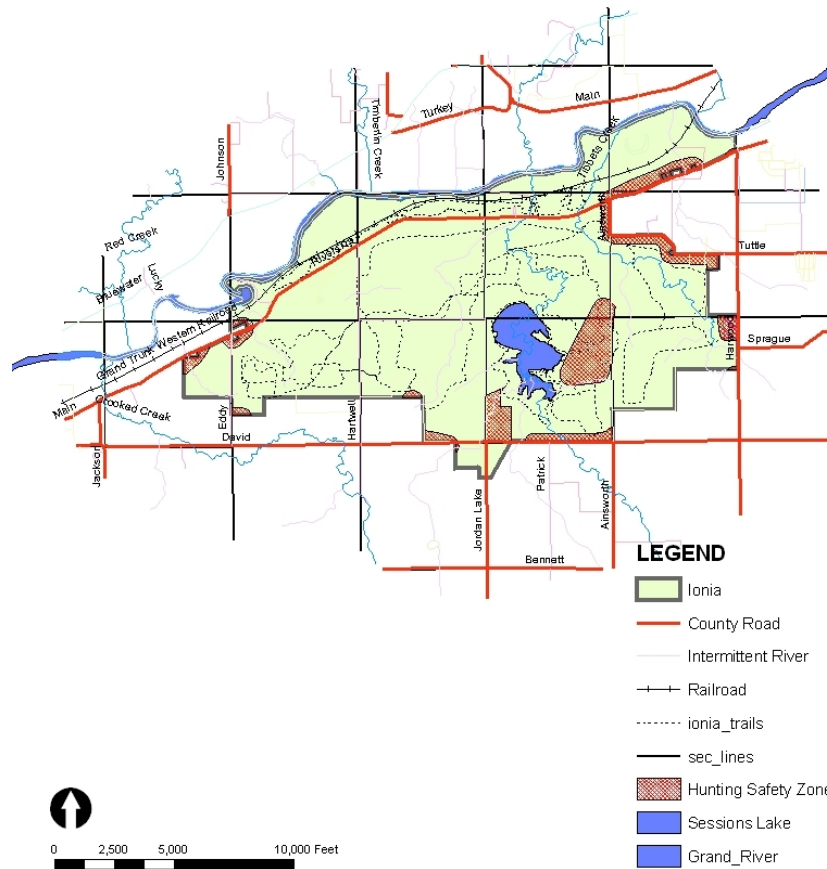
(1) “The legislature finds:

- (a) Michigan State Parks preserve and protect Michigan’s significant natural and historic resources.
- (b) Michigan State Parks are appropriate and uniquely suited to provide opportunities to learn about protection and management of Michigan’s natural resources.
- (c) Michigan State Parks are an important component of Michigan’s tourism industry and vital to local economies.

(2) The department shall create, maintain, operate, promote, and make available for public use and enjoyment a system of state parks to preserve and protect Michigan’s significant natural resources and areas of natural beauty or historic significance, to provide open space for public recreation, and to provide an opportunity to understand Michigan’s natural resources and need to protect and manage those resources.”

- CONSERVATION COMMISSION DEDICATION OF IONIA STATE RECREATION AREA – At the May 14, 1965 meeting of the Department of Conservation, Conservation Commission, the proposal to develop the “State Lake – State Park” at Ionia was recommended and approved by the Commission. This approval provided the authority to acquire lands, develop the lake (Session Lake), and establish recreational opportunities for hunting, fishing and “general park purposes”. This action established “Ionia State Recreation Area.”
- PA 451 OF 1994, NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT (EXCERPT) – 324.41901 Regulation and prohibitions in certain areas; powers of department; area closures; hearings, investigations, studies, and statement of facts; regulations. – This part of PA 451 establishes the powers of the Department to establish safety zones for hunting. In accordance with the Administrative Rules established by Wildlife Division for hunting safety, a 450’ “Safety Zone” is established around all occupied dwellings (which includes campgrounds). Under the State Land Rules, the Department also has the authority to expand the application of this 450’ “Safety Zone” to encompass “Day-Use Areas” such as beaches, picnic areas, boat launches, and parking areas, should the need arise. This is determined on a case-by-case basis. At Ionia SRA, the Hunting Safety Zones are represented below:

Hunting Safety Zones



Additionally, **(from Wildlife Conservation Orders Re. goose hunting)** State recreation areas open, exceptions; September 1 to September 15 open season, exceptions.

(7) Those state recreation areas described in chapter VII as closed to the taking of animals shall be closed during the early September hunting season for Canada geese. All other state recreation areas not within the Saginaw bay unit shall have an open season from September 1 to September 15, except for those portions of the following areas which shall be closed and shall be posted in such a manner and at such locations as will provide reasonable notice of the closure to the public:

(h) Ionia recreation area shall be closed to the taking of animals from September 1 to Labor day within 450 feet of any campsite, picnic areas, beach, parking area, or boat launch. In addition, no animals shall be taken from the day after Labor day to September 15 after 8:00 a.m. within 450 feet of any campsite, picnic area, beach, parking area, or boat launch.

- NATURAL RESOURCE COMMISSION (NRC) DEDICATED FIELD TRIAL COURSE – Under authority of the “Special Dog Training Areas Act, Act 82 of 1947, the Natural Resources Commission designated Ionia RA as one of eight Field Trial Grounds locations in the state, and specifically designated (with a legal

description) three one-hour courses at Ionia RA for establishment of a “Championship” Trial grounds.

Department Of Natural Resources – Field Dog Trial Regulations - Chapter XV -- Field Dog Trials - 15.2 Field dog trial, defined; designated field dog trial areas established.

(1) For the purposes of this chapter, "field dog trial" means a trial or meet, advertised as such and open to entry by persons whose dogs qualify, in which not less than 4 participants, with dogs, under control, are permitted to dog train in competition or contest. This definition does not apply to an individual cast within a field dog trial. There may be fewer than 4 participants with dogs in an individual cast. Dogs in a field dog trial are awarded points, trophies, or other actual honors for their performance and demonstration of hunting skills. A person or a group of persons dog training their dogs in competition but not under permit by the department are not participating in a field dog trial.

(2) Designated field dog trial areas are established on state-owned lands within the following described areas:

(d) Section 2; the NW 1/4 of section 4; that portion of section 5 lying south of Riverside drive, T6N R7W; the SE 1/4 of the SE 1/4 of the SE 1/4 of section 32; that portion of section 33 lying south of Riverside drive; that portion of the N 1/2 of section 34 lying south of Riverside drive; the NW 1/4 of the SW 1/4 of section 34; and section 35, T7N R7W, Ionia county, within the Ionia recreation area.

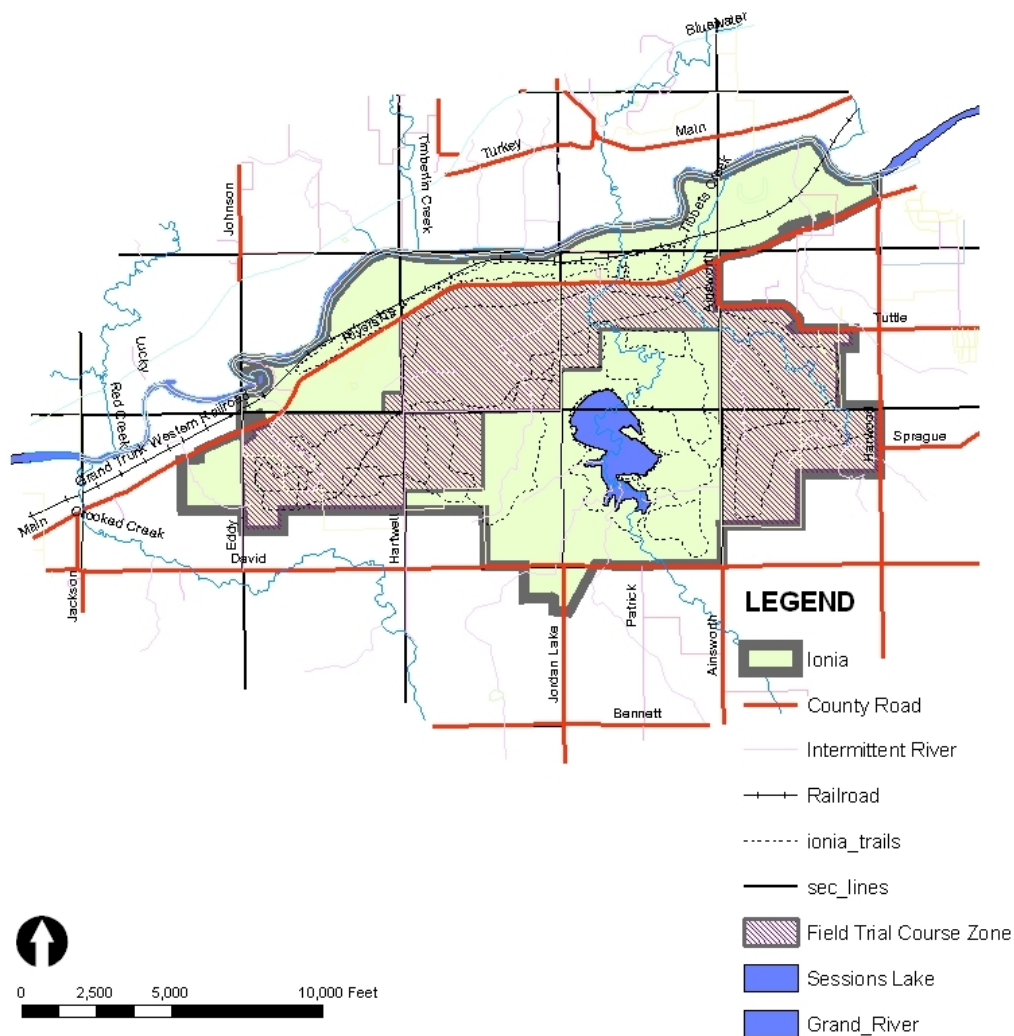
15.4 Field dog trial, unlawful acts.

Sec. 15.4. (1) It shall be unlawful to conduct a field dog trial between April 16 and July 14 without maintaining a list of all trial participants at trial headquarters. The list shall be kept throughout the duration of the trial and shall be available for inspection at any time by any peace officer.

(2) It shall be unlawful for a person to possess a firearm other than a shotgun, pistol, or revolver or ammunition other than blank cartridges while engaged in field dog trials, unless otherwise specifically authorized in writing by the director.

History: Am. 2, 1990, Eff. Feb. 19, 1990.

Designated Field Trial Course



- DEPARTMENT POLICY ON FIELD TRIALS – With the designation of the eight DNR locations for field trials (per direction of the NRC), the Department established guiding policy for the land administering agencies for operation of field trials on state lands. This impacts Parks and Recreation Division and Wildlife Division.
- “IONIA RECREATION AREA FIELD TRIAL MANAGEMENT PLAN – 1979” – Prepared by Wildlife Division, and approved by both Wildlife Division and Parks Division Chiefs, this management plan has served to guide both management and operation of field trials at Ionia SRA for the past 26 years. Stewardship is drafting a new “Field Trial Grounds Management Plan” with input from both Wildlife Division and the field trialers. When completed, this new plan will supersede the 1979 document.
- [LEASE BETWEEN STATE OF MICHIGAN AND IONIA FIELD TRIAL GROUNDS ASSOCIATION \(IFTGA\)](#) – On 2/25/2005 a lease was executed that provides for IFTGA operation and maintenance of the Field Trialers

Headquarters (approximately 14.5 acres) and the Field Trial Parking Area for Course #2 (approximately 1.5 acres). In addition to grounds and building maintenance, the IFTGA is also responsible for providing an annual work plan for maintenance of the field trial courses in compliance with the new “Field Trial Grounds Management Plan” now being drafted.

- SESSIONS LAKE DAM (DEQ MAINTENANCE REQUIREMENTS) – PRD must comply with DEQ Dam Maintenance Requirements that result from their routine inspections of the dam. Additionally, routine maintenance recommendations (as specified by DEQ) shall be complied with. Typically this requires on an annual basis; removal of woody vegetation from the earthen dam structure, clean-out of the dam toe drains, inspection and clean-up of the dam overflow course, and annual ‘exercising’ of the dam water control valve.



- AGREEMENT WITH IONIA COUNTY FOR PRD MAINTENANCE OF THEIR CEMETARY – As part of the gift of 320 acres of land, PRD agreed to maintain a cemetery associated with the land gift.



- IONIA COUNTY FOR USE OF THE “POSSE HOUSE” BY THE COUNTY SHERIFF’S POSSE - As part of the transfer of ownership of the old schoolhouse on the north side of Riverside Drive from Ionia County to PRD, the deed required that PRD allow use of the building by the County Sheriff’s Posse. It is used principally for target practice purposes. (NOTE...although the deed language states that the site will be used by the Sheriff’s Posse, in fact it is used by other local enforcement agencies and the Corrections Officers from the Ionia prison(s))

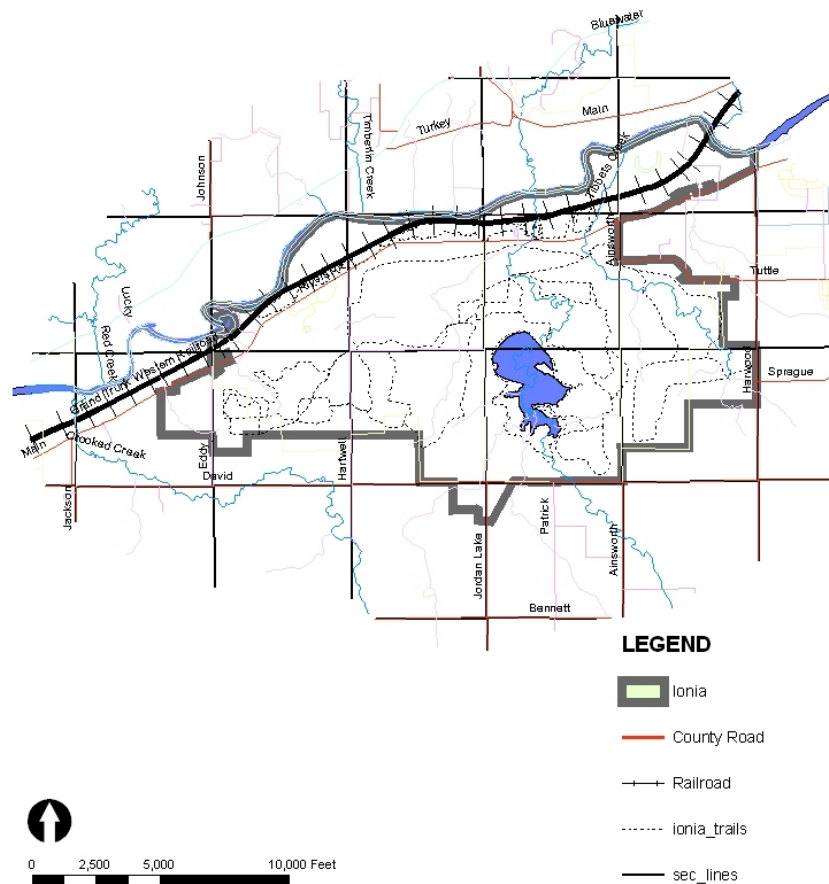


- TIBBETS CREEK IS A DESIGNATED TROUT STREAM – There are specific regulations regarding DEQ discharge permits. These control the temperature and quality of water discharges into streams. In concert with the intent of these legal requirements are ‘Best Management Practices’ that augment the effort to address water quality. Included in the Appendix is the document titled [“Evaluating Riparian Management Zones on State Lands”](#) and [“Water Quality Management Practices on Forest Land”](#). The Best Management Practices found in these reports will serve as guidance for PRD management decisions with regards to Tibbets Creek.
- MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH WEST MICHIGAN WETLANDS FOUNDATION (now disbanded) FOR THE CREATION AND MAINTENANCE OF THE WILDLIFE FLOODINGS – These floodings were created in 1988 for purposes of improving habitat for waterfowl, and providing waterfowl hunting opportunities in the park. Maintenance activities focus primarily on water level control structures. We have been assisted in this endeavor by beaver.



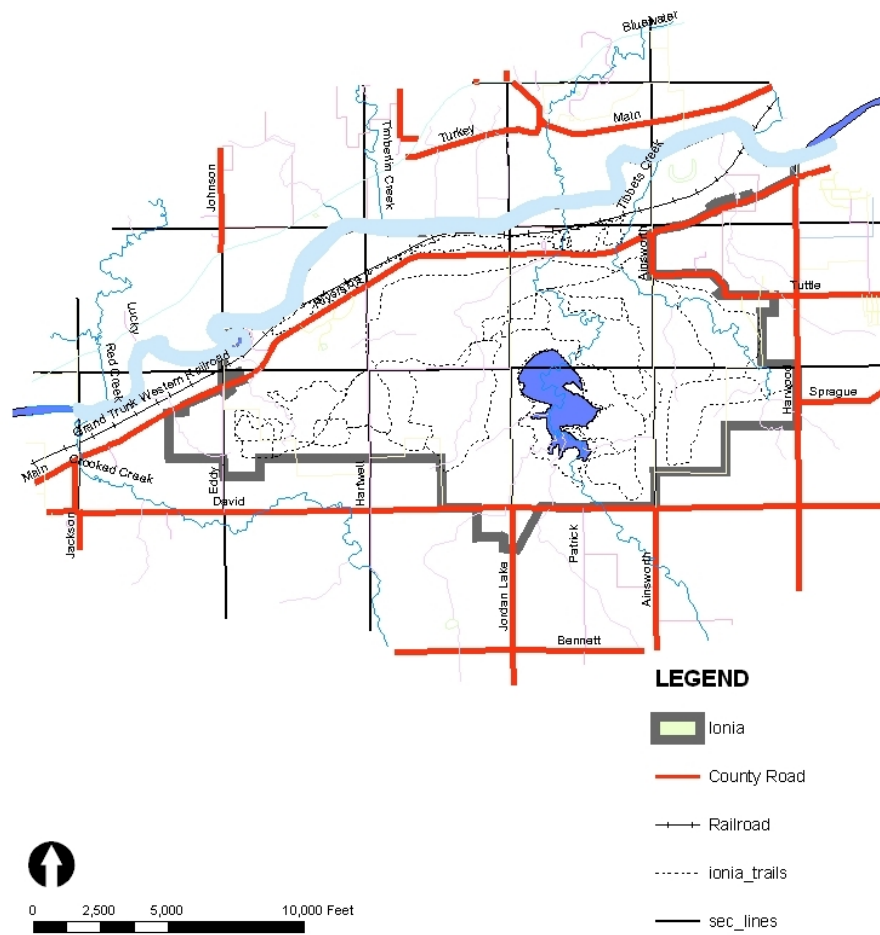
- R.O.W. FOR GRAND RAPIDS & EASTERN RAILROAD – The Right-of-Way for this railroad line is 100’ wide (50’ from center line). Grand Rapids & Eastern Railroad has the authority to require permits for any impacts to their ROW (ie. crossings or new drives). Note...as of this writing, this railroad line has shown no sign of activity, and local planning agencies are exploring the conversion of this line to a rail-trail use.

Ionia State Recreation Area
**GRAND RAPIDS & EASTERN
 RAILROAD R.O.W. – 100’**

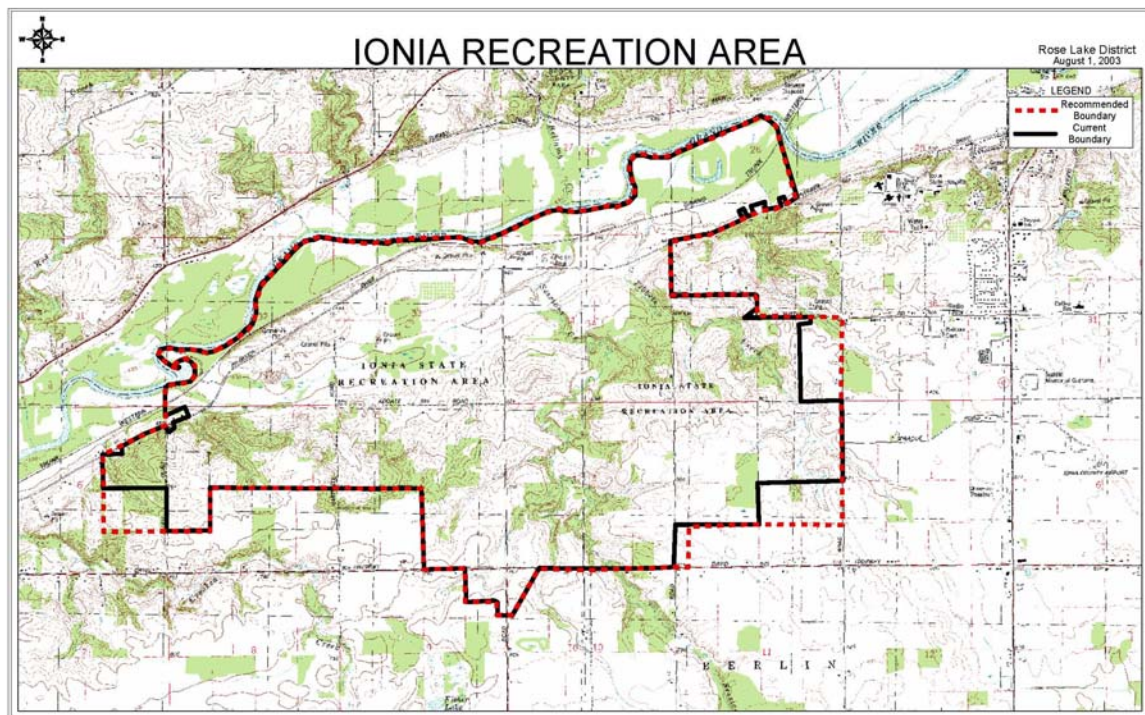


- R.O.W FOR COUNTY ROADS – The Right-of-Way for county roads is 66’ wide (33’ from center line). The county roads impacting Ionia SRA include; David Highway, Riverside Drive, Harwood Road, Ainsworth Road, Tuttle Road, Jordan Lake Road and Eddy Road. The Ionia County Road Commission has the authority to require permits for any impacts to their ROW (ie. crossings or new drives).

Ionia State Recreation Area
IONIA COUNTY ROAD(S) R.O.W. – 66’



- The Natural Resource Commission has approved a recommended boundary change for the park that includes additional land to the west and east ends of the park.



The Planning Team reviewed this new boundary designation and makes the following recommendation:

The south boundary of the Recreation Area should be David Highway and the east boundary as Harwood Road. The David Highway boundary would go behind the more intensively developed residential area at the west end of the Recreation Area.